

Highlights From *The Condition of Education 2016*

Spotlights



Kindergartners' Approaches to Learning, Family Socioeconomic Status, and Early Academic Gains

First-time kindergartners who demonstrated positive approaches to learning behaviors more frequently in the fall of kindergarten tended to make greater gains in reading, mathematics, and science between kindergarten and second grade. For each additional point in students' fall kindergarten approaches to learning score, average gains from kindergarten to second grade were 3.4 points higher for reading, 1.9 points higher for mathematics, and 1.3 points higher for science. The positive relationships between initial approaches to learning behaviors and academic gains in reading, mathematics, and science were larger for students from lower socioeconomic status (SES) households than for students from higher SES households.

Differences in Postsecondary Enrollment Among Recent High School Completers

In fall 2013, among fall 2009 ninth-graders who had completed high school, three-quarters were enrolled at postsecondary institutions: some 14 percent were taking postsecondary classes only and were not enrolled in a degree program, 3 percent were enrolled in occupational certificate programs, 25 percent were enrolled in associate's degree programs, and 32 percent were enrolled in bachelor's degree programs. The remaining 25 percent were not enrolled in a postsecondary institution at all.

Post-Bachelor's Employment Outcomes by Sex and Race/Ethnicity

While 86 percent of all young adults ages 25–34 with a bachelor's or higher degree were employed in 2014, differences in employment outcomes were observed by sex and race/ethnicity. For example, female full-time, year-round workers earned less than their male colleagues in nearly all of the occupation groups examined and for every employment sector (e.g., private for-profit, private nonprofit, government). Black young adults who worked full time, year round also earned less than their White peers in a majority of the occupations analyzed.

Population Characteristics



ATTAINMENT

Educational Attainment of Young Adults

In 2015, some 36 percent of 25- to 29-year-olds had attained a bachelor's or higher degree. The percentage of White 25- to 29-year-olds who had attained this level of education increased from 1995 to 2015, as the size of the White-Black gap in the attainment of a bachelor's or higher degree widened from 13 to 22 percentage points and the size of the White-Hispanic gap widened from 20 to 27 percentage points.

International Educational Attainment

The OECD average percentage of the adult population with a postsecondary degree increased by 11 percentage points between 2001 and 2014, from 22 to 33 percent. During the same period, the percentage of U.S. adults with a postsecondary degree increased by 7 percentage points, from 37 to 44 percent.

ECONOMIC OUTCOMES

Annual Earnings of Young Adults

In 2014, the median earnings of young adults with a bachelor's degree (\$49,900) were 66 percent higher than the median earnings of young adult high school completers (\$30,000). The median earnings of young adult high school completers were 20 percent higher than the median earnings of those without a high school credential (\$25,000).

Employment and Unemployment Rates by Educational Attainment

The employment rate was higher for people with higher levels of educational attainment than for those with lower levels of educational attainment. For example, among 20- to 24-year-olds in 2015, the employment rate was 89 percent for those with a bachelor's or higher degree and 51 percent for those who did not complete high school.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Family Characteristics of School-Age Children

In 2014, approximately 20 percent of school-age children were in families living in poverty. The percentage of school-age children living in poverty ranged across the United States from 12 percent in Maryland to 29 percent in Mississippi.

Participation in Education

ALL AGES

Enrollment Trends by Age

In 2014, some 93 percent of 5- to 6-year-olds and 98 percent of 7- to 13-year-olds were enrolled in elementary or secondary school. In that same year, 68 percent of 18- to 19-year-olds and 38 percent of 20- to 24-year-olds were enrolled in a secondary school or postsecondary institution. For all age groups from 3 to 34, total school enrollment rates were not measurably different in 2014 than they were in 2013.

PREPRIMARY

Preschool and Kindergarten Enrollment

In 2014, the overall percentage of 3- to 5-year-olds enrolled in preschool programs was higher for children whose parents had a graduate or professional degree (49 percent), as compared to those whose parents had a bachelor's degree (43 percent), an associate's degree (38 percent), some college (35 percent), a high school credential (32 percent), and less than a high school credential (28 percent).

ELEMENTARY/SECONDARY

Public School Enrollment

Between school year 2013–14 and 2025–26, total public school enrollment in preK through grade 12 is projected to increase by 3 percent (from 50.0 million to 51.4 million students), with changes across states ranging from an increase of 39 percent in the District of Columbia to a decrease of 15 percent in New Hampshire.

Charter School Enrollment

Between school years 2003–04 and 2013–14, overall public charter school enrollment increased from 0.8 million to 2.5 million. During this period, the percentage of public school students who attended charter schools increased from 1.6 to 5.1 percent.

Private School Enrollment

Private school enrollment in prekindergarten (preK) through grade 12 increased from 5.9 million students in 1995–96 to 6.3 million in 2001–02, and then declined to 5.4 million in 2013–14.

Racial/Ethnic Enrollment in Public Schools

Between fall 2003 and fall 2013, the number of White students enrolled in public elementary and secondary schools decreased from 28.4 million to 25.2 million, and the percentage who were White decreased from 59 to 50 percent. In contrast, the number of Hispanic students enrolled increased from 9.0 million to 12.5 million, and the percentage who were Hispanic increased from 19 to 25 percent.

English Language Learners in Public Schools

The percentage of public school students in the United States who were English language learners (ELL) was higher in school year 2013–14 (9.3 percent) than in 2003–04 (8.8 percent) and 2012–13 (9.2 percent). In 2013–14, five of the six states with the highest percentages of ELL students in their public schools were located in the West.

Children and Youth with Disabilities

In 2013–14, the number of children and youth ages 3–21 receiving special education services was 6.5 million, or about 13 percent of all public school students. Among students receiving special education services, 35 percent had specific learning disabilities.



POSTSECONDARY

Undergraduate Enrollment

Total undergraduate enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions increased 31 percent from 13.2 million in 2000 to 17.3 million in 2014. By 2025, total undergraduate enrollment is projected to increase to 19.8 million students.

Postbaccalaureate Enrollment

Total enrollment in postbaccalaureate degree programs was 2.9 million students in fall 2014. Between 2014 and 2025, postbaccalaureate enrollment is projected to increase by 21 percent, to 3.5 million students.

Elementary and Secondary Education



SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS AND CLIMATE

Characteristics of Traditional Public and Public Charter Schools

High-poverty schools, in which more than 75 percent of the students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch under the National School Lunch Program, accounted for 25 percent of all public schools in 2013–14. In that year, 24 percent of traditional public schools were high-poverty, compared with 39 percent of charter schools.

Concentration of Public School Students Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch

In school year 2012–13, higher percentages of Black, Hispanic, and American Indian/Alaska Native students attended high-poverty public schools than did Pacific Islander students, students of Two or more races, Asian students, and White students (ordered by descending percentages).

School Crime and Safety

Through nearly two decades of decline, the rate of nonfatal victimization of 12- to 18-year-old students at school fell from 181 victimizations per 1,000 students in 1992 to 33 per 1,000 students in 2014. The rate of nonfatal victimization of these students occurring away from school also declined from 173 to 24 victimizations per 1,000 students during the same period.



TEACHERS AND STAFF

Teachers and Pupil/Teacher Ratios

Of the 6.2 million staff members in public elementary and secondary schools in fall 2013, half (3.1 million) were teachers. The pupil/teacher ratio in public schools declined from 15.9 in 2003 to 15.3 in 2008. In the years after 2008, the pupil/teacher ratio rose, reaching 16.1 in 2013.



FINANCE

Public School Revenue Sources

From school years 2002–03 through 2012–13, total elementary and secondary public school revenues increased from \$572 billion to \$618 billion (in constant dollars). From 2011–12 through 2012–13, total revenues for public elementary and secondary schools decreased by \$4 billion, or 1 percent.

Public School Expenditures

Current expenditures per student in public elementary and secondary schools increased by 5 percent overall between 2002–03 and 2012–13; however, expenditures per student peaked in 2008–09 at \$11,621 and decreased each year since then, after adjusting for inflation. The amount for 2012–13 (\$11,011) was less than 1 percent lower than the amount for 2011–12 (\$11,074).

Education Expenditures by Country

In 2012, the United States spent \$11,700 per full-time-equivalent (FTE) student on elementary/secondary education, which was 31 percent higher than the OECD average of \$9,000. At the postsecondary level, the United States spent \$26,600 per FTE student, which was 79 percent higher than the OECD average of \$14,800.



ASSESSMENTS

Reading Performance

While the 2015 average 4th-grade reading score was not measurably different from the 2013 score, the average 8th-grade score was lower in 2015 than in 2013, according to data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress. At grade 12, the average reading score in 2015 was not measurably different from that in 2013.

Mathematics Performance

The average 4th- and 8th-grade mathematics scores in 2015 were lower than the scores in 2013 but were higher than the scores in 1990, according to data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress. At grade 12, the average mathematics score in 2015 was lower than the score in 2013, but not measurably different from the score in 2005.

International Assessments

Among 15-year-old students, 29 education systems had higher average scores than the United States in mathematics literacy, 22 had higher average scores in science literacy, and 19 had higher average scores in reading literacy, according to the 2012 Program for International Student Assessment (PISA).



STUDENT EFFORT, PERSISTENCE, AND PROGRESS

High School Coursetaking

The percentages of high school graduates who had taken mathematics courses in algebra I, geometry, algebra II/trigonometry, analysis/precalculus, statistics/probability, and calculus increased from 1990 to 2009. The percentages of high school graduates who had taken science courses in chemistry and physics also increased between 1990 and 2009.

Public High School Graduation Rates

In school year 2013–14, the adjusted cohort graduation rate (ACGR) for public high schools rose to an all-time high of 82 percent. This indicates that approximately 4 out of 5 students graduated with a regular high school diploma within 4 years of the first time they started 9th grade. Asian/Pacific Islander students had the highest ACGR (89 percent), followed by White (87 percent), Hispanic (76 percent), Black (73 percent), and American Indian/Alaska Native (70 percent) students.

Status Dropout Rates

The status dropout rate decreased from 12.1 percent in 1990 to 6.5 percent in 2014, with most of the decline occurring since 2000. From 1990 to 2014, the Hispanic status dropout rate decreased by 21.8 percentage points, while the Black and White status dropout rates decreased by 5.8 and 3.7 percentage points, respectively. Nevertheless, in 2014 the Hispanic status dropout rate (10.6 percent) remained higher than the White (5.2 percent) and Black (7.4 percent) status dropout rates.

Young Adults Neither Enrolled in School nor Working

In 2015, some 13 percent of young adults ages 18 to 19 and 17 percent of young adults ages 20 to 24 were neither enrolled in school nor working. In 2015, the percentage of young adults ages 18 to 19 neither enrolled in school nor working was higher for those from poor families (26 percent) than for their peers from nonpoor families (10 percent). The same pattern was observed for young adults ages 20 to 24 (31 percent for those from poor families versus 14 percent for those from nonpoor families).

→ TRANSITION TO COLLEGE

Immediate College Enrollment Rate

The immediate college enrollment rate for high school completers increased from 60 percent in 1990 to 68 percent in 2014. The rate in 2014 for those from high-income families (81 percent) was nearly 29 percentage points higher than the rate for those from low-income families (52 percent). The 2014 gap between those from high- and low-income families did not measurably differ from the corresponding gap in 1990.

College Participation Rates

Although the college enrollment rate increased between 2004 and 2014 for Hispanic young adults (25 vs. 35 percent), it did not measurably differ between 2004 and 2014 for young adults who were White, Black, Asian, Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaska Native, and of Two or more races.

Postsecondary Education

POSTSECONDARY ENVIRONMENTS AND CHARACTERISTICS

Characteristics of Degree-Granting Postsecondary Institutions

In 2014–15, some 29 percent of 4-year institutions had open admissions policies (accepted all applicants), an additional 28 percent accepted three-quarters or more of their applicants, 30 percent accepted from one-half to less than three-quarters of their applicants, and 13 percent accepted less than one-half of their applicants.

Characteristics of Postsecondary Students

Some 10.6 million undergraduate students attended 4-year institutions in fall 2014, while 6.7 million attended 2-year institutions. Some 77 percent of undergraduate students at 4-year institutions attended full time, compared with 40 percent at 2-year institutions.

Characteristics of Postsecondary Faculty

From fall 1993 to fall 2013, the number of full-time faculty at degree-granting postsecondary institutions increased by 45 percent, while the number of part-time faculty increased by 104 percent. As a result of the faster increase in the number of part-time faculty, the percentage of all faculty who were part time increased from 40 to 49 percent during this period.



PROGRAMS, COURSES, AND COMPLETIONS

Undergraduate Degree Fields

From 2003–04 to 2013–14, the number of associate’s degrees conferred increased by 51 percent, from 665,300 to over 1 million, and the number of bachelor’s degrees conferred increased by 34 percent, from 1.4 million to 1.9 million.

Graduate Degree Fields

Between academic years 2003–04 and 2013–14, the number of master’s degrees conferred increased by 34 percent, from 564,300 to 754,500, and the number of doctor’s degrees conferred increased by 41 percent, from 126,100 to 177,600.

Undergraduate Retention and Graduation Rates

About 60 percent of students who began seeking a bachelor’s degree at a 4-year institution in fall 2008 completed that degree within 6 years; the graduation rate was higher for females than males (62 percent vs. 57 percent).

Degrees Conferred by Public and Private Institutions

The number of postsecondary degrees conferred at each degree level increased between 2003–04 and 2013–14. The number of certificates below the associate’s degree level awarded during this period increased by 41 percent, the number of associate’s degrees increased by 51 percent, the number of bachelor’s degrees increased by 34 percent, the number of master’s degrees increased by 34 percent, and the number of doctor’s degrees increased by 41 percent.



FINANCE AND RESOURCES

Price of Attending an Undergraduate Institution

The average net price of attendance (total cost minus grant and scholarship aid) for first-time, full-time students in 2013–14 (in constant 2014–15 dollars) was \$12,750 at 4-year public institutions, \$24,690 at 4-year private nonprofit institutions, and \$21,000 at 4-year private for-profit institutions.

Loans for Undergraduate Students

In 2013–14, the average annual student loan amount of \$7,100 was 23 percent higher than the average of \$5,700 in 2005–06 (in constant 2014–15 dollars). For undergraduate students ages 18 to 24 in their 4th year of college or above, the average cumulative amount borrowed was \$26,400 in 2011–12.

Sources of Financial Aid

The percentage of first-time, full-time undergraduate students at 4-year degree-granting postsecondary institutions receiving financial aid was higher in 2013–14 (85 percent) than in 2008–09 (82 percent).

Postsecondary Institution Revenues

Between 2008–09 and 2013–14, revenues from tuition and fees per full-time-equivalent (FTE) student increased by 17 percent at public institutions (from \$5,681 to \$6,639, in constant 2014–15 dollars) and by 6 percent at private nonprofit institutions (from \$19,206 to \$20,293). At private for-profit institutions, revenues from tuition and fees per FTE student were 34 percent higher in 2013–14 than in 2008–09 (\$19,480 vs. \$14,515).

Postsecondary Institution Expenses

In 2013–14, instruction expenses per full-time-equivalent (FTE) student (in constant 2014–15 dollars) was the largest expense category at public institutions (\$8,070) and private nonprofit institutions (\$17,003). At private for-profit institutions, instruction expenses per FTE student was the second largest expense category (\$5,266).